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ABSTRACT

WRITTEN FOR TEACHER AIDES, THIS PAMPHLET PROVIDES A HANDY, READABLE, AND HIGHLY USABLE GUIDE TO DAILY CLASSROOM INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN. USING EASILY UNDERSTOOD EXAMPLES, THE AUTHOR TAKES YOU THROUGH THE WORLD OF THE CHILD, POINTING OUT WHAT TO EXPECT IN VARIOUS SITUATIONS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT. FOR INSTANCE, SHE NOTES THAT CHILDREN ARE BETTER ABLE TO RUN AND JUMP THAN THEY ARE TO DRAW OR CUT BECAUSE OF DIFFERENTIAL RATES OF DEVELOPMENT OF LARGE AND SMALL MUSCLES. SHE DISCUSSES THE PROBLEM OF THE DISPARITY IN MATURITY BETWEEN BOYS AND GIRLS. SHE WARNS OF CHILDREN WHO WILL COME TO SCHOOL WITH A GERMINATING SICKNESS AND PASS IT AROUND THE CLASSROOM. SHE MENTIONS THE PROBLEM OF VERBAL EXPRESSION FOR ALL CHILDREN, BUT ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE TO WHOM ENGLISH IS RELATIVELY UNFAMILIAR. HER ADVICE IN ALL SITUATIONS IS BASED ON LEARNING PRINCIPLES WHICH ADVOCATE GIVING THE CHILD A SECURE AND COMFORTABLE OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND TO EXPERIENCES AND HAVING ADULTS REACT TO HIM IN A FRIENDLY, POSITIVE WAY. (MH)

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CHARACTERISTICS OF PRIMARY LEVEL CHILDREN

Donna Peck

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Sincere thanks are also extended to JoAnn Voltura who assisted in first getting this down on paper and Gwen King who did the perceptive and beautiful illustrations.

Donna Peck

PURPOSE

A wealth of material directed to informing prospective specialists, i.e., teachers and other educators, about the vast and somewhat nebulous field of child development has been written. We recognize there are scholarly, more comprehensive, more precise, and certainly more exhaustive materials available. Our purpose is not to add, but to sift from this knowledge relevant, useful guidelines which illustrate predictable behaviors and, more importantly, point out behaviors to be encouraged. Obviously the choices are arbitrary; hopefully, most of the right ones have been made.

The audience is special, but composed of many non-prospective specialists--namely, teacher aides whose formal academic training is less extensive than those of other educators.

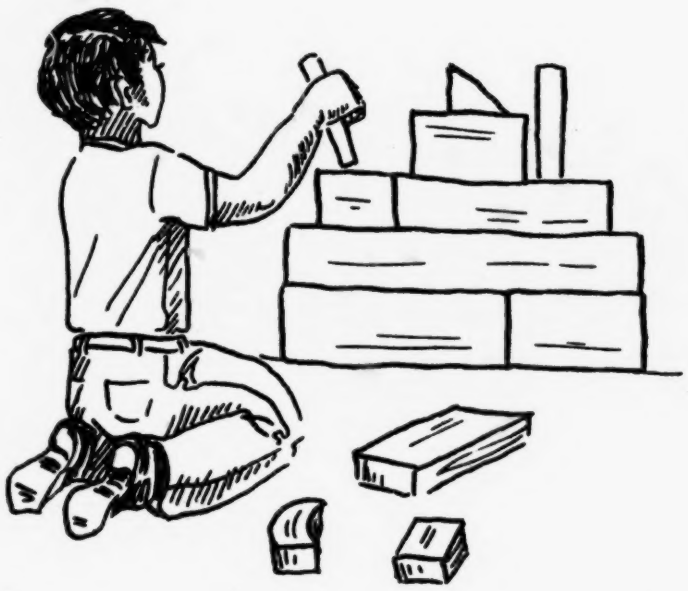
One objective of the pamphlet is that it be read; therefore, it must be readable. It is designed to be read, re-read, marked up, internalized, and used on an everyday basis. If this pamphlet achieves that objective, it shall have served its purpose.

Donna Peck

CHARACTERISTICS OF PRIMARY LEVEL CHILDREN

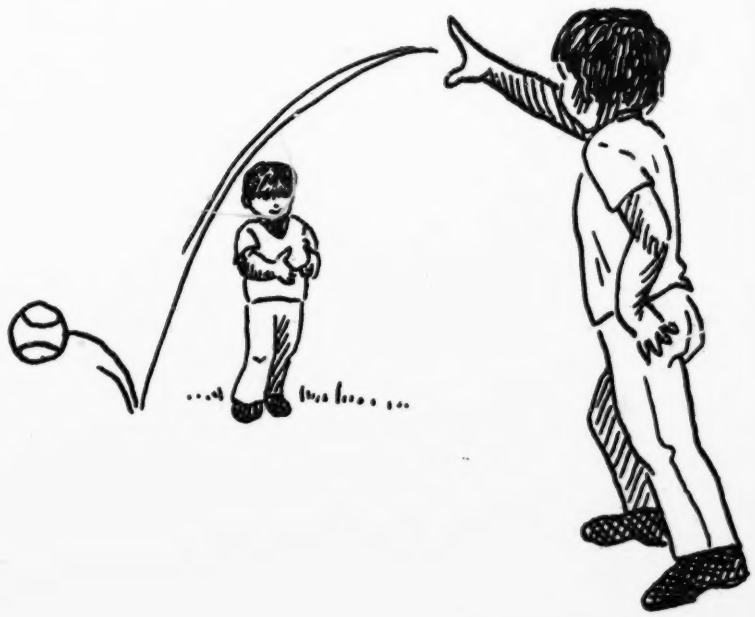
The children in your classes will probably be like this.

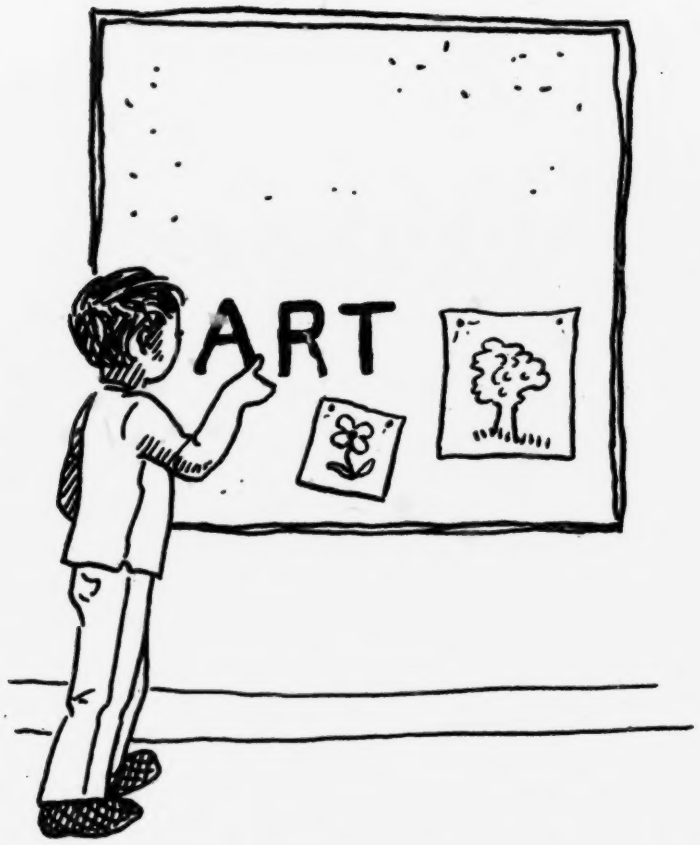
DIFFERENT PARTS OF A CHILD'S BODY GROW AT DIFFERENT SPEEDS. FOR EXAMPLE, A FIVE OR SIX YEAR OLD USUALLY USES LARGE MUSCLES MORE THAN SMALL MUSCLES. HE WILL JUMP AND CLIMB BETTER THAN USE SCISSORS OR CRAYONS.



BLOCKS, CLAY AND PUZZLES GIVE HIM PRACTICE IN FINGER CONTROL. HE NEEDS THIS PRACTICE. HE CAN BUILD THINGS. HE CAN PUT SMALL PARTS TOGETHER. HE CAN DRAW. HE CAN WRITE OR COPY. HE CAN PASTE. EXPECT HIM TO BE CLUMSY AT FIRST. HE WILL GET BETTER.

EYE MUSCLES MAY NOT COMPLETELY COORDI-
NATE WITH HAND MOVEMENT. A CHILD MAY
MISJUDGE DISTANCE. THROWING A BALL MAY
BE HARD FOR HIM. IT DOESN'T GO WHERE
HE WANTS IT. AS HE PRACTICES AND GROWS,
LARGE MUSCLE SKILLS IMPROVE.





HIS EYE MUSCLES HAVE DIFFICULTY
FOCUSING IF THINGS ARE TOO FAR
AWAY OR TOO SMALL. MAKE BULLETIN
BOARDS IN LARGE, BOLD LETTERS.
PUT PICTURES AT EYE LEVEL.

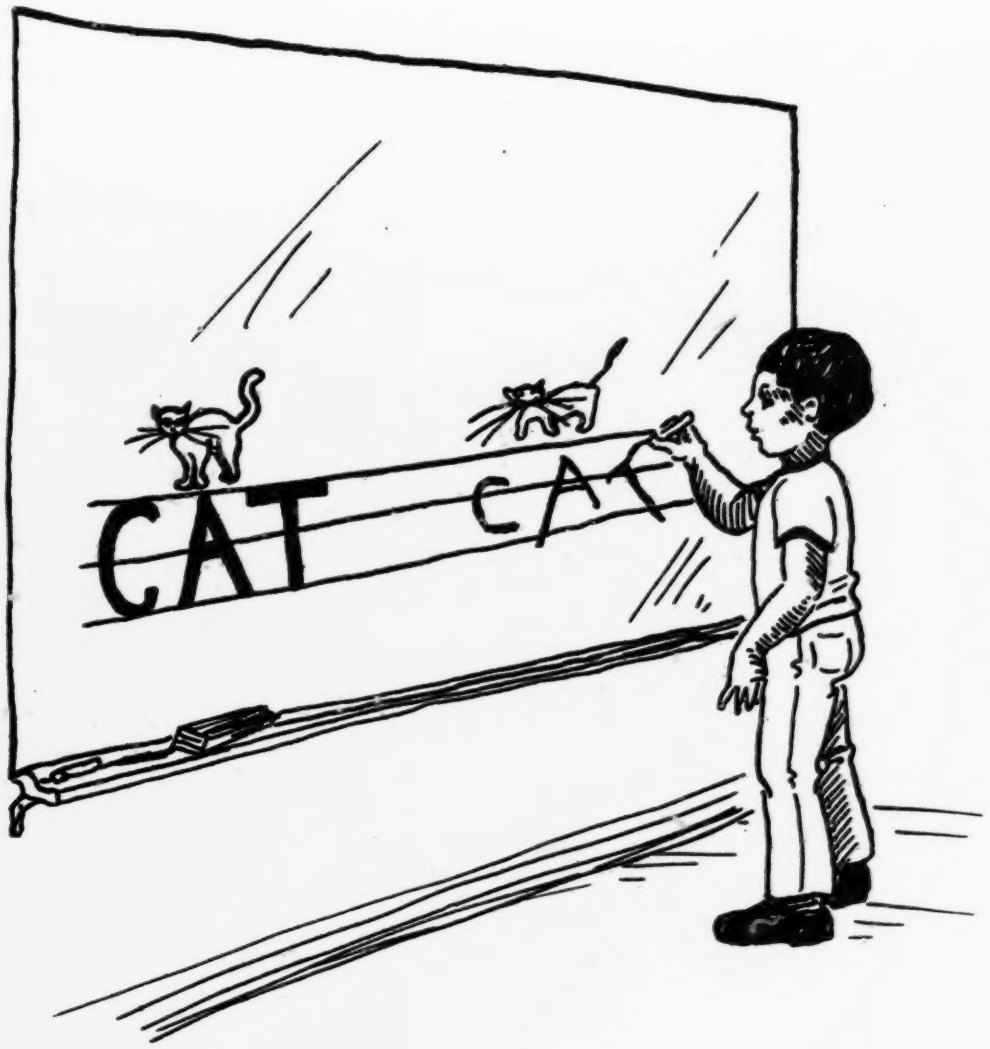
DO NOT EXPECT CHILDREN TO

WRITE WITHIN LINES AT FIRST.

COMPLIMENT THE CHILD WHO CAN.

DO NOT COMPARE OR PUNISH ONE

WHO CANNOT. THEY GET BETTER.



GRADUALLY BUT STEADILY THEY

DEVELOP GREATER SKILL. EXPECT

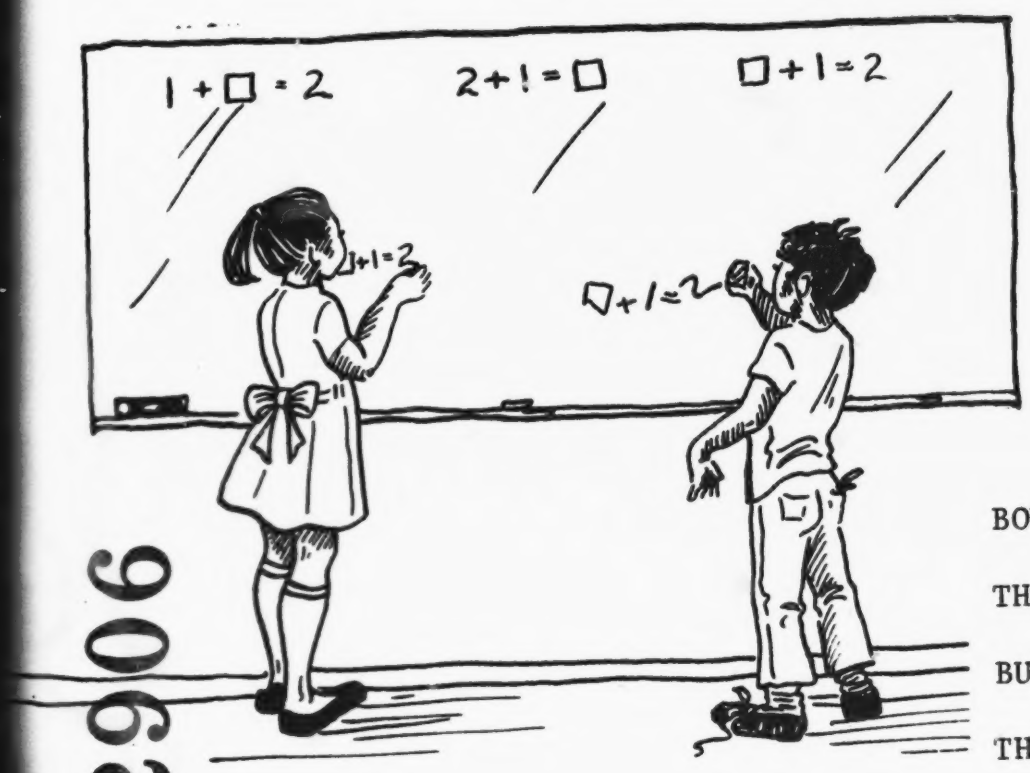
POOR SKILL AS NORMAL AT FIRST.

COMPLIMENT IMPROVEMENT.

GIRLS MATURE MORE RAPIDLY THAN BOYS. THEY OFTEN DO MORE THINGS WELL, BOTH PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY. THIS HELPS MAKE GIRLS WANT TO PERFORM MORE. BE SURE THAT YOU GIVE BOYS JUST AS MANY CHANCES TO PERFORM. BE SURE YOU COMPLIMENT BOYS AS MANY TIMES AS GIRLS.

GIVE AS MUCH ATTENTION TO BOYS AS TO GIRLS. GIRLS WILL ACCEPT AND LEARN THE SAME TASKS BOYS LIKE. ENCOURAGE ACTIVITIES THAT THE WHOLE GROUP CAN DO. THIS GIVES THE BOYS MUCH-NEEDED ATTENTION AND A SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT.

BOYS GROW MORE SLOWLY. THIS DOES NOT MEAN GIRLS ARE SMARTER. BOYS ARE SMART, BUT THEY ARE READY FOR OTHER THINGS. THEY ARE BETTER AT LARGE MUSCLE ACTIVITY. THEY MOVE MORE. GIVE THEM MANY CHANCES TO LEARN THROUGH LARGE MUSCLE ACTIVITIES.



BOYS ARE MORE IMMATURE THAN GIRLS. THEY CAN LEARN AS EASILY AS GIRLS, BUT THEY MAY NEED TO LEARN DIFFERENT THINGS OR LEARN THINGS AT A DIFFERENT TIME.

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SOME SOUNDS CAN BE HARD FOR HIM TO MAKE. IF HE SPEAKS ANOTHER LANGUAGE, IT WILL BE VERY HARD TO MAKE SOME ENGLISH WORDS "SOUND RIGHT." HE NEEDS SMILES AND ENCOURAGEMENT, OR HE MAY STOP TRYING.

MANY CHILDREN LOSE THEIR TEETH AT THIS AGE. IF A CHILD WORRIES ABOUT GETTING NEW ONES, TALK WITH HIM ABOUT NEW TEETH.

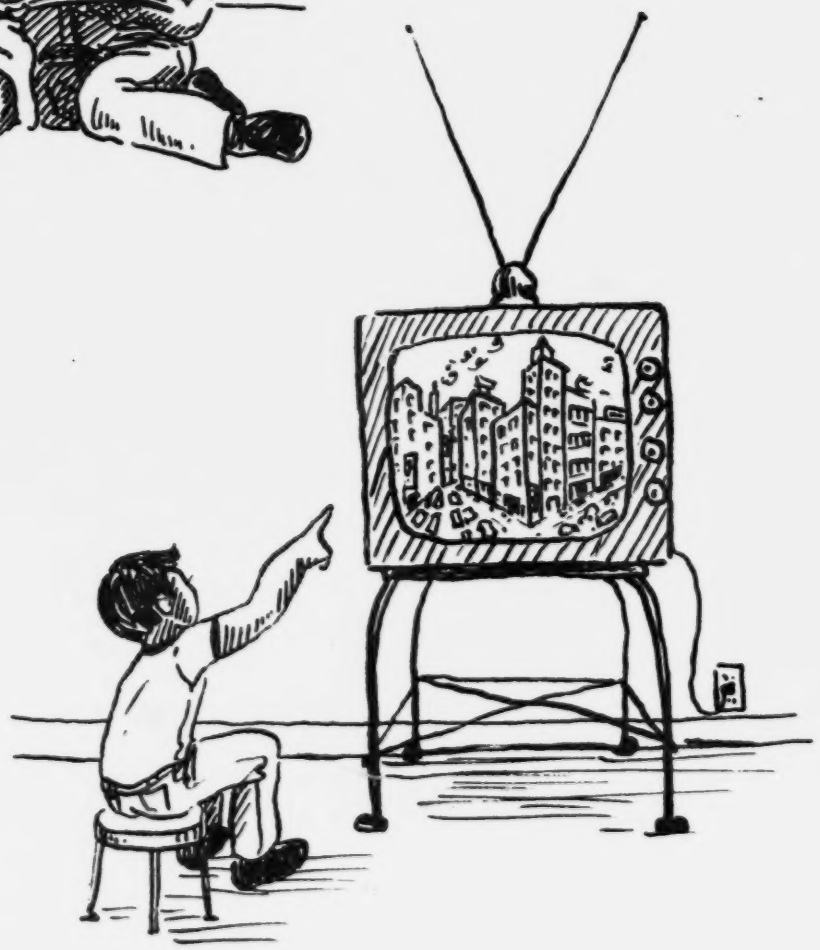
COMPLIMENT EVERY CHILD WHEN HE HAS DONE WELL. SOUNDS ARE USEFUL WHEN THEY MEAN SOMETHING. UNDERSTANDING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN "SOUNDING RIGHT." COMPLIMENT CHILDREN WHO ARE WILLING TO TRY AND TRY AGAIN.

MOST CHILDREN ARE HEALTHY, BUT CHILDHOOD DISEASES (COMMUNICABLE DISEASES) ARE EASILY CARRIED FROM SCHOOL TO HOME, OR BACK. HE MAY SEEM EXTRA TIRED, CRANKY, SLEEPY AND FEEL WARM. THIS TELLS YOU HE IS SICK.

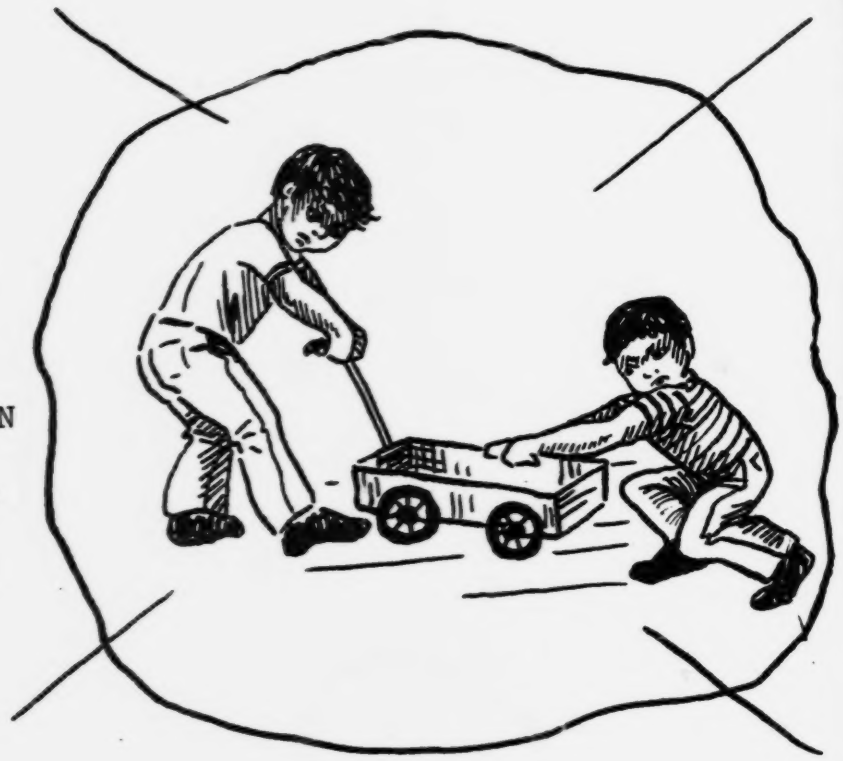
A CHILD CARRIES A DISEASE BEFORE IT SHOWS. OTHER CHILDREN ARE MORE LIKELY TO GET THE DISEASE FROM HIM NOW THAN AFTER HE "BREAKS OUT." BE KIND AND PATIENT. TRY TO SEE SYMPTOMS IN TIME TO PROTECT THE OTHER CHILDREN.

THE HOME AND FAMILY ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO THE CHILD. DURING THE FIRST PART OF THE SCHOOL YEAR, HE DEPENDS ON YOU TO TAKE THE PLACE OF HIS SECURE HOME LIFE WHEN HE IS WITH YOU. HE MAY THINK OF YOU AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR HIS MOTHER MORE OFTEN THAN AS A TEACHER.

T.V. MAY HAVE GIVEN NEWS OF THE WORLD OUTSIDE HIS OWN COMMUNITY. THOSE CHILDREN WHO HAVE T.V. MAY WANT TO TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY HAVE SEEN. ENCOURAGE THIS. THEY LEARN WATCHING T.V.



HELP EACH CHILD LEARN THAT THERE ARE OTHERS . . . THAT OTHER CHILDREN LAUGH AND CRY, AND NEED THINGS. GIVE HIM CHANCES TO SHARE, GIVE, AND HELP. EACH CHILD WILL NEED YOUR HELP TO LEARN THAT HE CAN HAVE MANY OF THE THINGS HE WANTS WITHOUT CRYING OR FIGHTING WITH HIS NEIGHBOR.



A CHILD'S EMOTIONAL GROWTH EXPANDS TO INCLUDE THE SOCIAL WORLD WHEN HIS LIFE BEGINS TO POINT "OUTWARD" INSTEAD OF ONLY "INWARD." SOME CHILDREN LEARN THIS QUICKLY. OTHERS NEED A LONG TIME TO LEARN HOW TO GET ALONG WITH OTHERS. THEY NEED MUCH HELP.

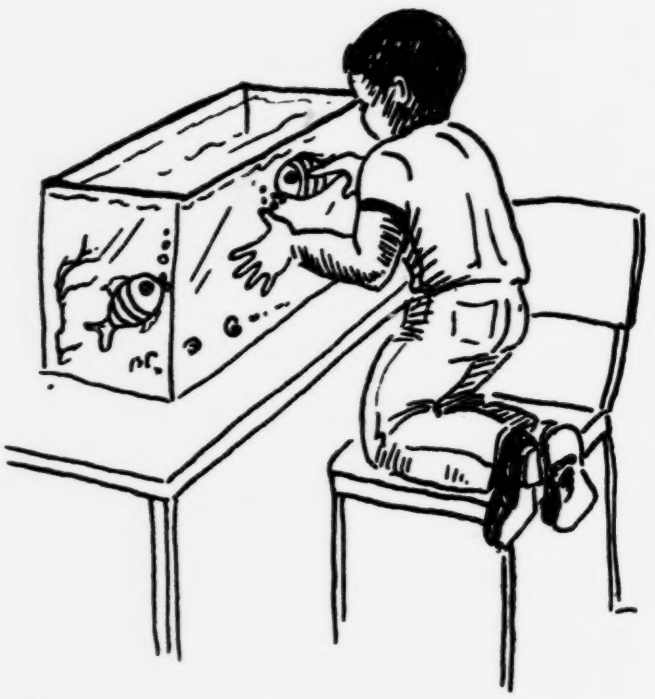
QUITE OFTEN, THE CHILD WILL REMIND YOU THAT HE IS BIG NOW. HE LIKES TO HAVE THIS RECOGNIZED. COMPLIMENT GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT. NOTICE AND COMPLIMENT THE "LITTLE THINGS." THEY ARE IMPORTANT.

WHEN HE DOES NEW THINGS, POINT OUT THAT HE IS GETTING BIGGER AND CAN DO THINGS BETTER NOW. HE ENJOYS BEING PRAISED BY AN ADULT. PRAISE IS IMPORTANT. HE NEEDS AND RESPONDS TO PRAISE.

A CHILD MUST KNOW HE CAN BE TRUSTED. HE CAN LEARN. HE CAN SUCCEED IN MANY THINGS. HE IS AN ABLE, COMPETENT, AND ADEQUATE PERSON WHO HAS SOMETHING TO GIVE. YOUR PRAISE AND TRUST HELPS HIM.

THIS WILL HELP HIM FEEL GOOD ABOUT HIMSELF. AT THIS TIME A CHILD MAY FEEL HE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON AND IS VERY CONCERNED WITH "ME." THIS IS NORMAL. YOU HELP HIM LEARN TO APPRECIATE OTHERS.

A CHILD OF THIS AGE IS VERY CURIOUS. HE WANTS TO LEARN. HE WANTS TO BECOME MORE SKILLED. SCHOOL MUST BE A PLACE WHERE HE CAN BE CURIOUS. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU ANSWER HIS QUESTIONS. THIS IS ONE WAY HE LEARNS.

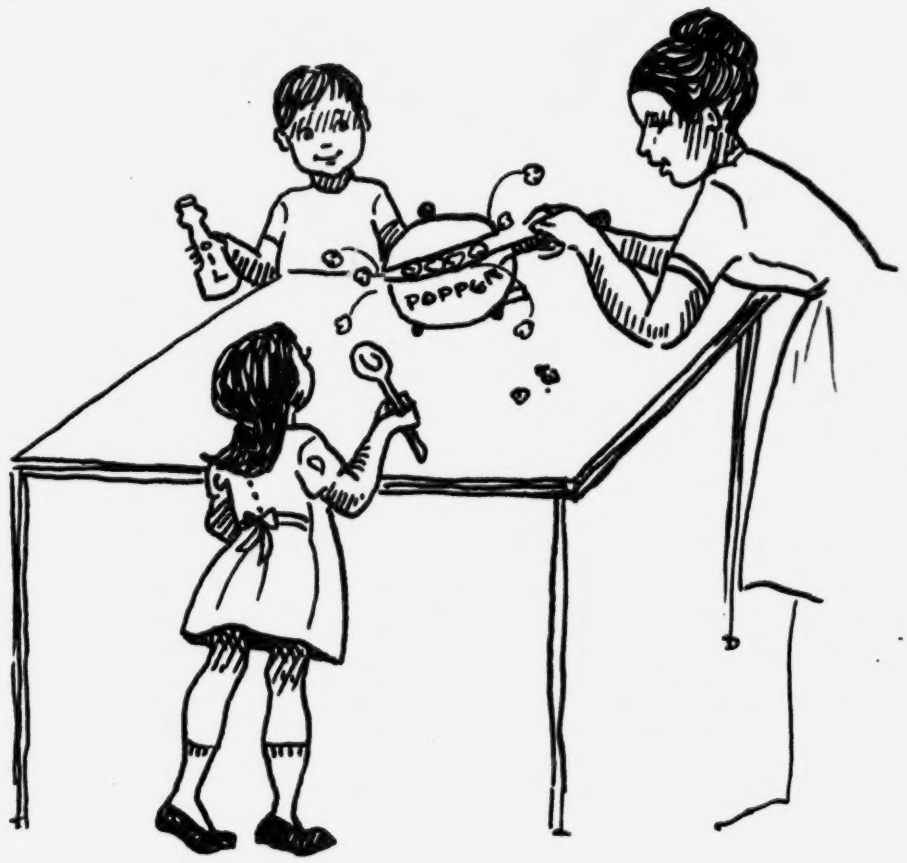


IF HE SHOWS YOU A SMALL ROCK, TALK TO HIM ABOUT IT. ASK QUESTIONS. YOU OR THE TEACHER COULD SHOW HIM BOOKS WITH PICTURES OF ROCKS. WRITE DOWN SOMETHING HE SAYS ABOUT THE ROCK. SHOW HIM WHAT HE SAID ON PAPER. MAKE THIS FUN FOR HIM. HE IS LEARNING MANY NEW THINGS.

SCHOOL MUST BE A PLACE TO LEARN ABOUT NEW THINGS. SOMETIMES HE WILL WANT TO DO AN ACTIVITY JUST BY HIMSELF. GIVE HIM TIME TO DO THIS. HE LEARNS THIS WAY, TOO.

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH ACTIVITY . . . THROUGH MOVEMENT. SOMETIMES THIS LOOKS LIKE PLAY. SOMETIMES IT IS. WELL-PLANNED ACTIVITIES ARE LEARNING EXPERIENCES. YOU AND THE TEACHER NEED TO PLAN TOGETHER FOR LEARNING AND ACTIVITY.

CHILDREN MUST BE INTERESTED IN LEARNING EXPERIENCES. WELL-PLANNED, ACTIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES ARE MORE INTERESTING WHEN YOU ARE INTERESTED. SHOW YOUR INTEREST.



A SCIENCE PROJECT CAN BE FUN.

MOVE.
WALK.
TALK.
ASK QUESTIONS.

A SCIENCE PROJECT CAN BE SHARED.

POP CORN. MAKE ICE CUBES (WITH KOOL-AIDE). BAKE A CAKE. PLAN. GIVE <u>EACH</u> A TASK.

WALK.
TALK.
ASK QUESTIONS.
ANSWER QUESTIONS.

A CHILD WILL PROBABLY TALK

MORE . . . AND THE SENTENCES

MAY BECOME MORE COMPLICATED.

ENCOURAGE "SPEAKING UP."

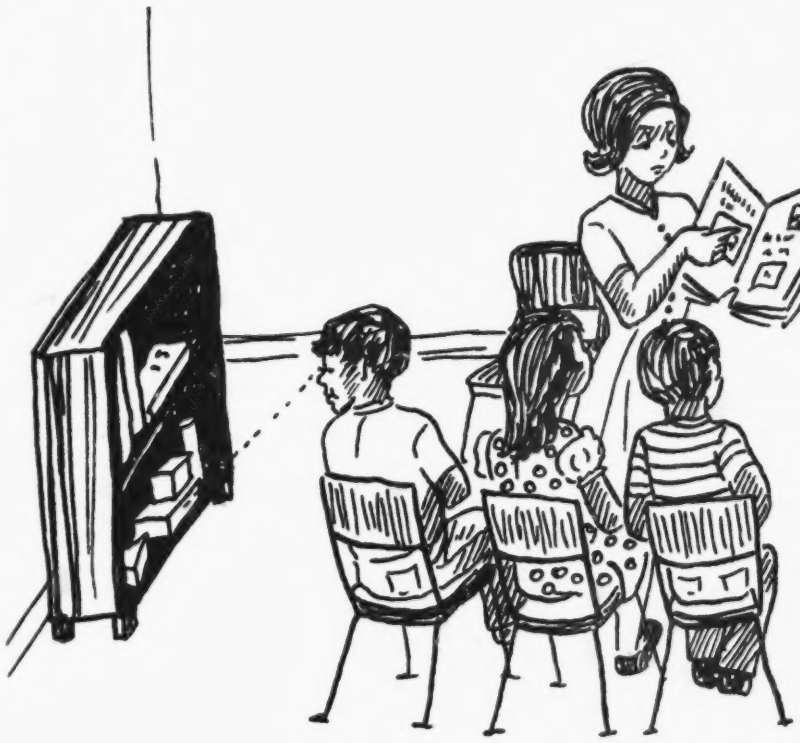
ENCOURAGE TALK.

LISTEN TO HIM TELL YOU THINGS.

READ BOOKS WITH PICTURES OF REAL THINGS TO HIM. HE LIKES TO LOOK AT BOOKS. HE PRETENDS TO READ. ENCOURAGE THIS . . . EVEN IF IT IS UPSIDE DOWN! HE ENJOYS ACTING THINGS OUT. HELP HIM "PLAY LIKE."

THIS IS CALLED ROLE-PLAYING. IT CAN BE VERY IMPORTANT FOR CHILDREN TO ROLE-PLAY. DURING THE ORAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM LESSONS, CHILDREN BECOME "THE TEACHER." THERE ARE MANY OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO ROLE-PLAY DURING READING ACTIVITIES AND ON THE PLAYGROUND.

MANNERS ARE TAUGHT BY EXAMPLE. BE A GOOD ONE. WHEN YOU DO A SONG OR FINGER PLAY ABOUT MANNERS, DISCUSS SHARING, GIVING OR TAKING TURNS. SHOW THIS AS PART OF BEING LIKED BY FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS. IT'S FUN TO HAVE FRIENDS.



UNLESS VERY INTERESTED, ATTENTION SPAN MAY NOT EXCEED TEN TO FIFTEEN MINUTES. ONCE THE INTEREST LAGS, MOVE TO ANOTHER LEARNING ACTIVITY WITH HIGH INTEREST.

YOU HELP THEM WHEN YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE CHILDREN, IN WHAT THEY ARE DOING, IN WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE THEM TO DO, AND IN WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE THEM TO BE.

For more information, you might like to read these:

Association for Childhood Education.
Feeling and Learning. Washington D. C. 1965
(Combination pictures and prose. Easy but very descriptive, personal and useful.)

Aston-Warner, Sylvia.
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English, Horace.
Dynamics of Child Development. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York. 1961. All: Select by interest and/or need.

Gans, Roma.
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Holt, John.
How Children Fail. Dell Publishing Co., New York, 1964.

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Teaching the Young Child. Houghton-Mifflin, Boston, 1960. Chap. 1-5, 14, 16.

Zintz, Miles
Corrective Reading. William Brown & Co., Dubuque, Iowa. 1966. Chap. 5, 9.